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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/691,365	10/22/2003	Alan Lampe Browne	GP-303275	4958
7590	01/26/2005		EXAMINER	
KATHRYN A MARRA General Motors Corporation Legal Staff, Mail Code 482-C23-B21 P.O. Box 300 Detroit, MI 48265-3000			TORRES, MELANIE	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3683	
			DATE MAILED: 01/26/2005	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/691,365	BROWNE ET AL.	
<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>		
Melanie Torres	3683		

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 November 2004.

2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 8-14 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1,2,6 and 7 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 3-5 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 11/12/04.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Namaduri et al.

Re claim 1, Namaduri et al. disclose a magnetorheological damper, the damper comprising: a cylindrically shaped housing (102), a magnetorheological fluid disposed in the cylindrically shaped housing; a piston assembly (104) disposed within the cylindrically shaped housing in sliding engagement with the cylindrically shaped housing defining a first chamber and a second chamber, wherein the piston assembly comprises a plurality of cylindrically shaped fluid passageways (106 or 156) extending from the first chamber to the second chamber, and at least one electromagnet (116); and a power supply in electrical communication with the at least one electromagnet.

Re claim 7, Namaduri et al. disclose a third chamber defined by a second floating piston and an end of the housing, wherein the third chamber is filled with an inert gas. (Figure 4A)

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

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3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Namaduri et al.

Re claim 2, Namaduri et al. do not teach wherein the plurality of cylindrically shaped fluid passageways defines a cross sectional area of the piston assembly of at least about 30 to about 70 percent. It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify Namaduri et al. by having a passageway cross sectional area between 30 and 70 percent since applicant has not disclose that having the specific range solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose and it appears that the shock absorber would perform equally well with cross sectional areas of a variety of ranges.

5. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Namaduri et al. in view of Munning et al.

Re claims 6, Namaduri et al. do not teach wherein the cylindrically shaped fluid passageway (131) has a diameter that increases from the first chamber to the second chamber. Munning et al. teach wherein the cylindrically shaped fluid passageway (131) has a diameter that increases from the first chamber to the second chamber. (Figure 14) It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have provided the fluid passage of Munning et al. in the damper

of Namaduri et al. since it is well known that such a passage would provide throttling and thus improve the damping characteristics of the damper.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

6. Claims 8-14 are allowed.
7. Claims 3-5 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Response to Arguments***

8. Applicant's arguments filed November 9, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that the fluid passageways are not cylindrical. It is the examiner's position that the passageways of Namuduri et al. are cylindrical although they differ from applicant's cylindrical passages. Further, Namuduri et al. teaches cylindrical passages 156.

In response to applicant's arguments against the references individually, one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). Specifically, re claim 6, Munning was relied upon merely as a teaching of a

throttling passage in a damper. The use of this type of passage is well known for its throttling characteristics in the art and therefore, the rejection is maintained.

### ***Conclusion***

**THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melanie Torres whose telephone number is (703)305-0293. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 6:30 AM - 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bucci can be reached on (703)308-3668. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

MT  
January 18, 2005

*Robert Siconolfi* 1/19/05  
ROBERT A. SICONOLFI  
PATENT EXAMINER